

Private Forests Tasmania develops 'no-cost' group certification documentation



WOOD IS GOOD .. CERTIFIED WOOD IS BETTER

PRIVATE Forests Tasmania has developed a program to help fill a market gap in certification, so that more forests can be certified, especially from smaller private woodlots.



Private forest growers .. AFG conference field tour in Tasmania.

Business development manager Martin Moroni says the program would not require a license fee, providing a valuable group certification system at no cost.

He said PFT would work in collaboration with Australian Forestry Standard Ltd to develop group certification documentation.

“Group certification is well developed elsewhere in the world, but could be further developed in Australia,” Mr Moroni said.

[European group certification is common; some groups in Germany and Austria consist of more than 40,000 individual small forest owners].

Mr Moroni said the Tasmanian government provided Private Forests Tasmania with funds to assist private forest owners along the certification pathway.

Private Forests Tasmania had developed template paperwork for AFS Group Certification (to AS4708-2013) that was now 95% complete and would save those adopting the template thousands of dollars in development costs.

“PFT hopes to spur group certification in our region and so close a market gap in certification that has the potential to benefit our stakeholders and the forest

industry,” Mr Moroni said.

Private Forests Tasmania will make the electronic versions of the group certification scheme documentation available to any seriously interested party for free in exchange for recognition for PFT’s role in developing the template.

Closing a market gap in certification

In his annual year in review, former CEO Tom Fisk said the organisation had responded to requests for assistance and advice from more than 550 private forest owners.

“We have continued to build new and strengthen current relationships with companies and stakeholder groups and have worked with others to research, pursue and promote new market opportunities for wood,” Mr Fisk said.

“We have targeted an expansion of the private forest estate and we have provided input and advice to government on matters of relevance to the private forestry sector.”

Mr Fisk said these initiatives had been supported by a strong financial result from a ‘tight budget’.

“Our state-wide operating structure continues to underpin our capacity to provide services that support private forest owners and engage in activities that add value to their forests,” he said.

At 1,110,000 hectares, the private forest estate comprises about 30% of Tasmania’s reported forest area. The native forest component – 858,000 ha – comprises 26% of the state’s native forest area while 242,000 ha comprises 78% of the plantation area.

“Last year, I alluded to the latent potential of the private forest estate to underpin further growth in the forest products processing

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Queensland cypress sector considers group certification

Rigorous system covers all steps in supply chain



Gathering at a cypress certification meeting in western Queensland are, from left, Todd Lewis, Walker Cypress, Mitchell Goodchild, Yuleba Cypress, Roger Brent, Hurfords, Mick Stephens, CEO, Timber Queensland, Vic Gersekowski, Vic's Timber, Simon Dorries, CEO Australian Forestry Standard Ltd, Ian Wilson, Injune Cypress, and Ian Hornick, Hornick Cypress.

PROCESSORS in the western Queensland cypress sector are considering a low-cost group chain-of-custody certification scheme following a presentation at Dalby by Australian Forestry Standard CEO Simon Dorries.

There are around 2.5 million ha of cypress-dominated forests in Australia, including cypress in forests mixed with eucalypts.

Management practices by both the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Forestry Commission NSW are certified under the AFS standard

AS 4708.

“The group AFS scheme can reduce certification costs by 60-70% for individual processors,” Mr Dorries said.

Timber Queensland is helping to facilitate the scheme for cypress division members, which tracks certified wood through their businesses.

“Reception to the scheme was very positive,” TQ CEO Mick Stephens said.

Mr Dorries said the scheme could get off the ground after group meetings with cypress producers and some random audits.

“There will be lot of cost savings here and it will allow cypress mills to use the AFS-Australian Made logo on products stamped with AFS certification compliance,” Mr Dorries said.

Consumers want wood products that are legal

“It’s a simple, yet rigorous system that covers all steps in the supply chain.

“Increasingly, consumers are demanding that the wood products they buy are made from

timber that can be traced back to a sustainable and legal source.”

The group certification proposal mirrors a successful scheme in Tasmania, managed by Fine Timbers Australia, which covers more than 40 sites ranging from the smallest user of high-end specialty timbers building custom guitars to the largest sawmilling enterprises and wood fibre exporters.

Information about chain-of-custody certification can be directed to AFS Ltd on (07) 3359 1758 or email Simon.Dorries@forestrystandard.org.au

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sector with associated benefits in economic growth for regional communities and the state more generally.

“Over the last year, it has been is pleasing to see some of this latent potential being realised with the total private forest harvest increasing by 48.5% over the previous year, to 2.94 million tonnes, a level of production not experienced for eight years,” Mr Fisk said.

He said as expected, the dominant contributor to this increase was the hardwood

plantation estate (89% increase to 1.79 million tonnes) as the fall-out from the failed MIS era subsided and new owners ramped up their harvesting and replanting activities.

“Of significance here is the substantial increase in the production of hardwood plantation export logs rather than wood chips, signaling that despite the estate being primarily developed for fibre production (pulp wood) a range of products are now produced that provide better returns to forest owners,” he said.



Martin Moroni ... government help along the certification highway.

“Further value adding within the state is hopefully the next step. At a little under 1 million tonnes across all log grades, the softwood estate continues to support (at its sustainable yield level) local processors and export activities alike, creating wealth

and employment opportunities.

“Nowhere near as significant in volume terms, but nevertheless important, is the 86% increase in native forest production to 169,000 tonnes. While this remains a miniscule proportion of peak production (2.6 million tonnes) achieved historically, it shows that there is ongoing interest in this very valuable forest asset that has largely remained dormant for many years.

“Importantly, these forests primarily belong to individual landowners.”

'Packaged' tour tagged with PEFC sustainability label

"DO you wake up and wonder which country you are in?"

"Actually, no – not yet anyway," came the reply in a distinctive Edinburgh burr.

Globe-trotting Scottish-born Ben Gunneberg, secretary-general of PEFC International, was in Australia recently meeting stakeholders and visiting paper and packaging operations in Sydney and Melbourne, as well as addressing AusPak, the largest processing and packaging event in the southern hemisphere at Sydney showgrounds.

He has taken 25 flights and visited more than a dozen countries this year carrying the standard of the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification, the world's largest forest certification system, supported by 750,000 forest growers with 300 million ha certified.

A total 46 national members and 38 endorsed national certification systems have joined forces under the PEFC umbrella to collaboratively promote sustainable forest management.

Mr Gunneberg said an increasing number of companies were keen to demonstrate that the fibre they used in packaging



Welcoming Ben Gunneberg (third from right) at a dinner in Sydney are Andrew Dunn, CEO, Timber Development Association, Dr Hans Drielsma and Suzanne Little, AFS board directors, Simon Dorries, AFS CEO, and Rob De Marco, marketing manager for Ta Ann Tasmania.

came from a certified sustainable source.

"This is important as consumers are increasingly conscious of the impact of their purchasing decisions on the environment," he said.

"There is a growing demand for more environmental information on packaging, to help consumers make informed choices; 54% of consumers trust environmental labels."

He said Ecuador was the latest country to show interest in PEFC certification. Situated on South America's west coast, the country is considered one of the world's 'mega diverse' countries,

with the Amazonian region in particular containing large tracts of intact natural forest of global conservation significance.

Consumers are increasingly conscious of the environment

The majority of forest biomass – about 9.8 million ha – is in the Amazon region (80%), with about 13% near the coast and the remaining 7% in the Andean highlands.

Based in Geneva, Switzerland, Mr Gunneberg has spent most

of his working life in forestry, starting as a forestry worker. He has held positions with the Timber Growers Association in the UK where he dealt with technical and policy aspects of forestry.

While in Australia, Mr Gunneberg was hosted by Australian Forestry Standard Ltd chair Dr Hans Drielsma and CEO Simon Dorries. His itinerary included the Forestry Corporation of NSW and visits to building and construction sites.

After the visit, Mr Gunneberg departed for European assignments before returning to PEFC headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

C-o-C certified: it is worth the paper it's printed on

"WE'RE delighted Australian printers are supporting certified paper products," AFS Ltd CEO Simon Dorries said after receiving copies of the AFS Bulletin produced on 'high white' laser stock from a Melbourne-based paper distributor.

Supplied by the BJ Ball Group, which has PEFC/AFS chain-of-custody certification, the paper carries the AFS, PEFC and Australia-made logos.



Stephanie Walls ... clients are demanding carbon neutral paper products.

"The paper and packaging industry is helping to ensure its products are Australian made and are from properly managed forests," Mr Dorries said.

Brisbane-based owner-manager of Worldwide Printing Solutions at Hamilton Stephanie Walls said her clients were demanding, more than ever, that paper products were certified and carbon neutral.

"The certified paper from BJ Ball is a valuable product for our business," Stephanie said.

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Forestry standards at front of sustainability conference

AUSTRALIA'S best practice forest certification systems and forestry's carbon-capturing role in domestic climate policy took a high profile at a national sustainability conference in Brisbane in March.

The Australasian event at the Hotel Grand Chancellor delivered 50 presentations on sustainable business practices, bringing together corporate leaders, academics and practitioners.

"This was a great opportunity to promote the AFS standard and chain-of-custody systems," said Simon Dorries, CEO, Australian Forestry Standard Ltd, who talked with conference delegates at a special booth.

Pathway to an economic low carbon economy

"The program updated a range of effective sustainable business practices including renewable energy and carbon initiatives, and AFS sits well in this space," Mr



AFS Ltd CEO Simon Dorries confers with Professor Deo Prasard, chief investigator (lead proponent) and CEO of the newly established CRC for Low Carbon Living, at a national sustainability conference in Brisbane. Professor Prasard is an international authority on sustainable buildings and cities and among the leading advocates for sustainability in Australia.

Dorries said.

"Sustainable forestry and a strong environmental policy are paramount to businesses investing in green energy and the building sector," Mr Dorries said.

The conference examined government sustainability and business funding plans.

Speaker Peter Castellás, CEO of the Carbon Market Institute, said the federal government had scheduled a major review of domestic climate policy in 2017.

"The international target, set by Australia in a commitment under the Paris Agreement, of a 26-28%



Peter Castellás ... major policy review.

reduction on 2005 levels by 2030 is a floor," he said.

"The targets will be reviewed and strengthened over time in line with the stock take and review process. The outcomes of the review will be critical in determining how Australia's

existing climate policies can evolve to meet current and future emissions reduction commitments."

Mr Castellás says business needs a climate policies that can ensure the effectiveness, stability and predictability of the domestic policy framework over the long term, and outline the pathway for the economic transition to a low (or zero) carbon economy.

Importantly, business need a carbon price signal to unlock investment.

"So key things the review will need to cover to help Australia business optimise its position in this transition include how the safeguard mechanism will evolve to be a true market-based system; what the future role of the domestic offsets scheme, the ER; how specific sectors, such as energy, are treated; and how the developments in international carbon markets may impact an emissions-intensive, trade-exposed economy and lead to potential linkage of market," Mr Castellás said.

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"Also, our NoCO2 accreditation from the Carbon Reduction Institute certifies that we are a carbon neutral business. This means that every tonne of greenhouse gas that we are responsible for is 100% offset. It also means that we have made an annual commitment to keep reducing our carbon footprint, reducing our impact on the environment."

The BJ Ball Group has been providing environmentally-responsible papers from around the world for more than 90 years.

The group's national customer service manager Brooke Schade said the digital print market had taken an exponential leap.



"Technology and demand is spreading and BJ Ball's small and wide format digital continues to

deliver 'green' innovative print media products and services," Brooke said.

Paper industry is ensuring products are from managed forests

"Our chain-of-custody policy has been in place for many years."

PEFC International secretary-general Ben Gunneberg was in Australia recently to confer with certified domestic companies in the paper and packaging supply chain. In Sydney, he spoke at AusPak, the largest processing and packaging event in the southern hemisphere.



'Aussie-grown' wood benefits from AFS awareness campaign

GENERAL manager Robert Yong and quality and safety manager Donovan Britton (pictured) check the PEFC and Australian-Made logos on packs of TPLY at the Ta Ann Tasmania plywood mill at Smithton.



TPLY is the Malaysian company's premium grade, Super E zero-emission product which has strong bonding strength for the rigours of outdoor weather conditions and building construction sites.

"We have worked closely with the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia to independently test and certify that our plywood products meet the highest Australian engineering standards," Robert Yong said.

TPLY is certified under the EWPA product certification scheme to meet AS/NZS 6669. All products carry the EWPA stamp of accreditation to the relevant Australian and NZ standards under a JAS-ANZ accredited, third-party audited

quality control program that is recognized internationally.

Ta Ann is one of a number of Australian companies granted use of the Australian-Made logo alongside the PEFC brand.

"This is part of a national awareness program about the legality, sustainable and social aspects of buying Australian made and grown wood products," AFS CEO Simon Dorries said.

"The program also works to maintain and provide employment in the industry in rural areas."

AFS owns and manages the

Australian Forest Certification Scheme and is the national governing body for the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) the world's largest forest certification system.

Helping forest managers grow their business

Mr Dorries said the relationship with the Australian-made campaign would help local forest managers and manufacturers grow their businesses, create jobs

and operate sustainably.

"The profile of the AFS brand is growing in Australia and internationally," he said. "This partnership will help further raise that profile."

Mr Dorries said promoting Australian certified wood was not only important to local forest managers, it was increasingly more important for Aussie consumers and retailers who were becoming more sensitive when selecting wood products and related services.

"They're now more focused on the environment and social consequences of their purchasing decisions," he said.

Companies that process, remanufacture and trade in wood and paper products can encourage sustainable forest management by purchasing and promoting their use of wood from certified forests.

Ta Ann Tasmania recently spent \$7 million upgrading their plants in Huonville and Smithton (including the addition of the new plywood plant).

Snap to it! Photo contest will be forest experience

AS governing body for PEFC international in Australia, Australian Forestry Standard Ltd is promoting a nation-wide photo contest, aimed at further raising awareness of the importance of sustainable forest management and certification. AFS CEO Simon Dorries said the contest theme - 'experience forests, experience PEFC - would enable participants to submit photos that fit this theme.

"This could embrace many topics, from forest landscapes to individual trees and plants, from harvesters to families hiking in the woods, from indigenous people to rural village life, from wooden buildings to photos of PEFC/AFS-labelled products," he said. The winning Australian entry selected by a panel of judges will receive a \$500 gift voucher.

All national competitions will run at the same time, from Earth Day (April 22) to World Environment Day (June 5).

By June 16, all PEFC national government bodies will have picked their winning entries which will then enter an international contest with an opportunity to win the International grand prize.

All entries can be submitted electronically or by postal mail. All photos will remain with AFS Ltd for future use and promotion of Australian forest management.

Photo entries (any number) can be emailed to AFS Photo Contest at Simon.Dorries@forestrystandard.org.au or post to Australian Forestry Standard Ltd, PO Box 786, New Farm, Qld 4005. Tel: (07) 3359 1758. www.forestrystandard.org.au





Entries open for 2017 Timber Design Awards in Melbourne

Certification recognised in AFS presentation

ENTRIES for the 2017 Australian Timber Design Awards have opened.

“Now in its 18th year, the event is distinguished by a proud heritage of innovation and achievement,” said Andrew Dunn, CEO of the Timber Development Association, which is organising the awards presentation night in Melbourne in October.

“The awards promote and encourage outstanding timber design,” Mr Dunn said.

The awards are open to builders, designers, architects, engineers and landscapers – or anyone involved in the design or building of structures that feature timber.

A Rising Star Award is available to students and entrants aged 35 years or under.

The Australian Forestry Standard will again recognise projects using certified timber. AFS Ltd CEO Simon Dorries presented the AFS Certified Timber Award last year to a school redevelopment project in Melbourne that is committed to environmental sustainability. The award was accepted by Law Architects, Melbourne, for the



Simon Dorries, CEO, Australian Forestry Standard Ltd, presents the Australian Certified Timber award to Sandy Law of Law Architects, Melbourne, at the 2016 Australian Timber Design Awards.

Woodleigh School homestead development at Langwarrin South, a Melbourne suburb.

The judges looked at the way entrants in the category used Australian certified timber as part of the design consideration.

One of the key visions for the Woodleigh School redevelopment was a commitment to environmental sustainability which required sourcing all local or Australian products wherever possible and ensuring that these products were sustainably sourced and manufactured. The winning entry explained how

Australian certified timber is a key component to the sustainable outcome desired by the designers.

The Woodleigh Homesteads are now part of a major research collaboration called Innovative Learning Environments and Teacher Change, an Australian

Distinguished by a proud heritage of innovation

Research Council Linkage project that will run over the next four years and will investigate the impact of new learning spaces

within schools.

Andrew Dunn said the Australian Timber Design Awards offered a unique system for build environment professionals and students to showcase their outstanding application of timber-based design projects

The awards also provided an online showcase system for competition participants.

Winners are featured permanently on the Australian Timber Design website.

“Nonetheless, whether you win or not, you will be acknowledged either as a runner up with the winners’ feature or listed as a participant in the yearly awards eBook,” Mr Dunn said.

The design awards website will display a summary profile of projects entered with an online photo gallery of entries and acknowledgement of award accolades.

WoodSolutions, resourced by FWPA, returns as platinum sponsor.

Information and registration details at www.timberdesignawards.com.au



Woodleigh School homestead by Law Architects, Melbourne .. winner of the 2016 AFS Certified Timber Award at last year's Australian Timber Design Awards.

PEFC asks: What is your opinion on standard setting?

Many improvements in document structure and clarity

PEFC is inviting all interested parties to give their comments on its revised Standard Setting standard - PEFC ST 1001:201X.

Deadline for comments is May 29.

This standard contains the rules that national standardising bodies have to follow when they develop and revise their sustainable forest management standards. Core principles of the standard development are stakeholder engagement, balance representation of different interests, consensus building, continuous improvement and transparency.

Improving the standard.

The revised document introduces many improvements in document structure and clarity. More importantly, it introduces critical improvements to the standard setting process itself, including:

- Inclusion of the nine major stakeholder groups of Agenda 21 (UNCED).
- Increased effort to get key stakeholders around the table.
- Additional rounds of public consultation.

By far the biggest change is the



Get involved ... revised PEFC standard setting introduces many improvements in document structure and clarity.

further detailing of the periodic review. Standards need to be reviewed five years after their approval. While this is not a new requirement, the standard now specifies the exact steps of such a review: recording feedback on the standard during its application, performing a gap analysis at the

start of the review, and organising stakeholder consultation.

Also new is the option of reaffirming an existing standard. When the review shows that the standard meets all current (stakeholder) needs, a revision would not be required and the standard can be reaffirmed.

This public consultation is the first one in a series of upcoming consultation as the PEFC standards revision process moves into its next phase. Over the next months, inquiry draft versions for all the standards under revision will be ready for public consultations. Stay tuned!

Public review first in a series of upcoming PEFC consultations

This consultation opened on March 27 going through until May 27. Comments need to be submitted through the PEFC online consultation tool. Access the consultation of PEFC ST 1001:201X.

Get involved.

- Keep up-to-date on the revision of our standards with the Standards Revision website.
- Sign up for the Standards Revision newsletter.
- Give your comments on the Standard Setting draft standard

If you have any question about the revision process, please get in touch with Christian Kämmer, technical officer, PEFC International on email technical@pecf.org

SFI community grants enhance quality of life across North America

THE Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. has announced 11 community grants that will advance the quality of life in communities across North America.

SFI is bringing together a diverse range of people from 50 organisations to support community engagement projects that put SFI at the intersection of

sustainable forestry, responsible procurement and thriving communities.

SFI engages local communities through a variety of initiatives including youth outreach, supporting indigenous values, forest education programs and green building projects for low-income families. Grantees include leading community organisations such as Scouts Canada.

Strengthens links between youth education and forest management

The grants were awarded through SFI's Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program, which is dedicated

to improving conservation of forests and strengthening the communities that depend on them.

These projects illustrate best practices and innovative approaches for partnerships focused on environmental sustainability and the quality of life in local communities. The

